

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1 (Currently Amended) Drinking straw attachment device for attaching drinking straws to beverage containers, wherein the drinking straws (4) are fed in the form of a drinking straw band (6, 26) which has been provided on a first side with a glue layer (8), the drinking straw attachment device comprising:

a conveyer device (10) for transporting the beverage containers (2) along a conveyor belt;

β1 a feeder device (12) for feeding the drinking straw band (6, 26) to the conveyor belt, wherein the drinking straw band engages a second side on the feeder device (12) which has not been provided with a glue layer;

a cutting device (14) in the area of the feeder device (12) for severing the drinking straw band (6, 26) between two drinking straws (4) each;

at least one pressing device (16a, 16b) for pressing a drinking straw (4) to a foil bag (2b) in such a manner that the drinking straw sticks with the glue layer (8) to the beverage container; and

the feeder device (12) at least at any point where the cutting device (14) severs two drinking straws (4) from each other has at least a first recess groove which in its height position is matched to the glue layer (8) and whose height extension (h1) corresponds at least to the width (h2) of the glue layer.

2 (Previously Amended) A drinking straw attachment device according to claim 1, wherein the feeder device (12) is a rotor.

3 (Currently Amended) A drinking straw attachment device according to claim 2, wherein the feeder rotor includes a plurality of vertically formed recesses (24) formed around the periphery thereof, and wherein the first groove is recesses are formed by a first peripheral circumferential groove (58) provided at the height of the glue layer (8) on the circumference of the feeder rotor (12).

4 (Previously Amended) A drinking straw attachment device according to claim 2 or 3, wherein the cutting device comprises a knife (14) which can be moved radially to the axis of the feeder rotor (12).

5 (Previously Amended) A drinking straw attachment device according to claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein the feeder device (12) comprises vacuum devices (54) holding the drinking straws (4) by vacuum pressure to the feeder device.

6 (Previously Amended) A drinking straw attachment device according to claim 1, wherein two pressing devices (16a, 16b) are provided which engage in the upper and lower area of the drinking straw (4) to be pressed-on.

β1 7 (Previously Amended) A drinking straw attachment device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the feeder rotor (12) comprises an extension in the axial direction corresponding at least to the height of a drinking straw (4) and where at the height of the pressing devices (16a, 16b) a second and a third peripheral groove (56a, 56b) are provided.

8 (Previously Amended) A drinking straw attachment device as claimed in claim 7, wherein a third pressing device is provided at the height of the first peripheral groove (58).

9 (Previously Amended). A drinking straw attachment device as claimed in claim 8, wherein the pressing devices (16a, 16b) are fingers which can be pivoted around an axis (19) and which press against each of the drinking straws (4) with the end remote from the axis (18) on the corresponding beverage containers (2b).

10 (Previously Amended) A drinking straw attachment device as claimed on claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein the drinking straws (4) are heat-sealed into a protective covering (26) forming the drinking straw band and that the drinking straws (4) are separated from each other by a seal seam (28).

11 (Previously Amended) A device as claimed on claim 1, wherein the glue layer comprises a transfer glue band (8) which has been applied in advance to the drinking straw band (6, 26).

12 (Previously Amended). A drinking straw attachment device as claimed in claim 1, wherein two drinking straw attachment stations are each provided with a feeder device (12), a cutting device (14) and a corresponding number of pressing devices (16a, 16b) which alternately provide the beverage containers (2a, 2b) with drinking straws (4).

13 (Currently Amended) Method for attaching drinking straws to beverage containers, comprising feeding the drinking straws in the form of a drinking straw band (6,

26) provided on one side with a glue layer (8) by a feeder device (12) to the beverage containers (2), severing the drinking straw band (6, 26) with a cutting device (14) in the area of the feeder device (12) between two drinking straws, piercing the cutting device (14) through the glue layer (8) and the drinking straw into a ~~recess~~ groove (58) provided on the feeder device (12) corresponding in its height position to the glue layer (8) and the height extension (h1) of which at least corresponds to the width (h2) of the glue band, and glueing the individual drinking straws onto the respective beverage containers.

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14. (New) An apparatus for attaching drinking straws to a beverage container comprising:

a plurality of straw packets formed in a straw band, the straw band having a glue band applied at a predetermined location; and

a feeder device adapted to deliver individual straw packets to the beverage containers, the feeder device having at least one circumferential groove formed around the periphery thereof at a height corresponding to the location of the glue band.

15. (New) The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising:

a press device having at least one finger extending into the at least one groove of the feeder device.

16. (New) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the press device rotates about a pivot to move individual straw packets from the feeder device to a corresponding beverage container.

17. (New) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the at least one groove includes an intermediate groove positioned proximate to the location of the glue band, the width of the intermediate groove being at least as wide as the width of the glue band.

18. (New) The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising:

a plurality of vertical recesses formed on the feeder device, the recesses having a shape substantially similar to the shape of the individual straw packets.

19. (New) The apparatus of claim 18 further comprising:

β1 an aperture formed in each vertical recess for providing a vacuum to hold the individual straw packets adjacent the feeder device.

20. (New) The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising:

a cutting tool operable for separating the individual straw packets from the straw band.
